

Hot holiday forecast, and the water year ends in drought for Southern California

High temperatures are in the forecast for the remainder of the week. The proverbial "hot as a firecracker" comes to mind. So does the higher electric bill.

A substantial high pressure area is going to be parked over the Western United States this week. It is strong enough to produce triple digit heat for the valley. And it's position is such that moisture will work it's way around the high pressure, creating the risk of thunderstorms over the mountains. So, prepare for 97–103 in the Sacramento area from Tuesday through maybe Friday, with hotter temps well north and south of the Capital. If thunderstorm overspill from the Sierra sends a few clouds into the valley, that would mean higher humidity discomfort, even if the temps are shaved a few degrees. A cool down should come in Saturday, give or take 18 hours.

The high country faces a higher fire risk due to lightning potential. A red flag warning is out until Thursday for portions of the Antelope Valley, L.A., Santa Barbara, and Venture Co. mountains, and the south coast of Santa Barbara county, where the winds will be strongest.

Rainfall this season has been tallied for California. The season runs from July 1 through June 30, contrary to the hydrologic year, which is calculated from October 1st through September 30th. So, here are the dismal numbers for precipitation statewide. Note: Northern California locations were in the higher percentage range, but still below average.

Eureka	93%
Redding	68%
Sacramento	60% (driest since 1976/77)
Blue Canyon	75%
San Francisco	76%
Los Gatos	46%
Fresno	54% (8th driest on record)
Big Sur	52%
Yosemite	32%
Santa Barbara	42%
Los Angeles	21% (driest since record keeping began in 1877)
San Diego	36%

Again, snowpack water content this season averaged 40% of normal on April 1.

This was the driest season ever in downtown Los Angeles, with a shortfall of nearly a foot of rain (3.21" out of the normal 15.14") The previous record was 4.42" in 2001–02.

It was also the driest season ever in Long Beach, at UCLA, Burbank, Palmdale, Lancaster, Camarillo, and Paso Robles. Of those, Palmdale had the lowest percentage of normal; only 9%.

Conservation, storage, and shortage will all be key topics going through the summer.

Have a safe holiday; STAY COOL!

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